

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-17, 19-20 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejections in view of the amendments and remarks as set forth below.

Drawings

The Examiner states that the three sheets of corrected drawings filed with the Amendment of May 27, 2004 are not included in the file. Applicants are submitting herewith a copy of the corrected drawings.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting

Claims 1-15, 17-20 stand rejected under the judicially created Doctrine of Obviousness-Type Double Patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12-17 of U.S. Patent 6,769,776. Also, claims 16 and 19 were rejected over claims 7 and 1 of the same patent in view of Edlinger (U.S. Patent 6,024,453).

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicants are filing herewith the Terminal Disclaimer. Accordingly, this rejection is believed to be overcome.

Statutory Double Patenting Rejection

Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as claiming the same invention as claim 1 of U.S. Patent 6,769,776. By way of the present amendment, Applicants have cancelled this claim rendering this rejection moot. Accordingly, this rejection is overcome.

CONCLUSION

Since the Examiner indicates that the claims are allowable and since Applicants have now overcome the double patenting rejections, Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments:      Corrected Drawings filed previously  
                         Terminal Disclaimer

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